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XVIII.—*Some Notes on the Route from Cordova to Mendoza in 1837.* By Capt. GOSSELMAN, of the Swedish Navy.

HAVING some years ago visited both North and South America, the Swedish government charged me with a mission to all the South American republics in 1836.—The greater number of high roads in that country are now tolerably well known, but, as I chanced to travel by a route from Cordova to Mendoza, that has not appeared hitherto on any map, I have great pleasure in submitting my notes to the Geographical Society; and I do this with more gratification from the opportunity it affords me of publicly expressing my thanks for the civility I have invariably met with from the officers of the British navy in command of ships on the South American station.

Quitting Buenos Ayres I travelled by the usual road to Cordova. This town, lying at the eastern foot of an isolated mountain-chain in the midst of the Pampas, is noted for its delicious figs and grapes, and its clear cold water—its Alameda is the finest in South America, and its university was once celebrated. From Cordova the road runs south for ten miles along the foot of the mountains, which are close on the right to a small hamlet named Durazno; thence it turns S.W. ten miles to a neat town of 3000 inhabitants named Alta Gracia. Proceeding in the same direction, at 5 miles we crossed the river Aniscato, probably a branch of the Rio Segundo, and at 10 miles beyond reached the large farm of Manzana, situated at the south-eastern foot of the mountains, which we now begin to ascend in a westerly direction for 5 miles, to the village of Yriartes, seated on the eastern edge of an elevated plain, across which we travelled S.W. 10 miles to a small stream, and again ascended a range of mountains, which here extends in a N. and S. direction, and reached their summit, which may be estimated at 2000 feet above the western plains. From this point a rapid and wild descent in a S.S.W. direction brought us to the picturesque and beautiful Valle del Nono, and to the hamlet of Ormillo, seated to the westward of a small stream which waters this well-wooded valley, and causes great fertility and a proportionate population. Continuing to the S.S.W. we crossed a considerable stream here called the Rio de los Sauces, and 8 miles beyond reached the hamlet of Las Liebres. Crossing another considerable stream, the Rio Quinto, running to the S.S.E., we again gradually entered on the vast level plain or Pampa—the striking feature of this part of South America—and successively pass the farms of Rancheria and Manantial, about 20 miles apart—and between which no water is to be had; here the plain now becomes arid and sandy, and the few pools have brackish water—nought to relieve the eye but an occasional stunted algarobo-tree, and not uncommonly the cattle perish for want of water. About 40 miles from

the Rio Quinto two remarkable hills, named El Gigante, or the Giant, rise abruptly from the plain to the height of about 500 feet: at the entrance of a narrow valley which lies between them is the village of Portezuela or "little gate." These hills are said to contain gold. 20 miles beyond, the traveller crosses the wide bed of a river called the Desaguadero or "outlet," but which in summer is always dried up: on its right or western bank are two houses bearing the high-sounding name of Alto Grande, and from this spot the glorious range of the snowy peaks of the Cordillera of the Andes, still at the distance of 160 miles, becomes distinctly visible, forming a striking contrast to the flat Pampa which apparently stretches on a dead level to their base. From Alto Grande the road turns due west. At 40 miles is the village of Val de Juanito, surrounded by more wood than had been visible in the whole extent of the last 100 miles; 45 miles farther lies the large and populous village of San Martin—consisting of a row of well-kept farms divided by double alleys of poplars, and abundantly watered; this place, whose name does not appear on any map, contains 2000 inhabitants, and is in a very thriving condition. Three leagues beyond we crossed the river of Mendoza, and from thence 8 leagues through a marshy country bring the traveller to his welcome resting-place in the beautiful city of Mendoza—the Montpellier of South America. Crossing the Cordillera by the pass of Uspallata, I traversed Chile, embarked at Valparaiso, sailed down the coast to Guayaquil; thence ascending over the eastern shoulder of Chimborazo, leaving its peak and that of Cariguairazo on the left, Condorata and El Altar on the right, and with Tunguragua in front, I crossed the famous suspension bridge, the Puente del Penipe—visited the village of Los Baños; the waterfall of Agoyan; Ambato, with its 12,000 inhabitants; Latacunga with 10,000, and where all the houses are built of pumice-stone; Callo, a house said to have existed from the time of the Incas, and placed at the foot of the snowy peak of the Cotopaxi: to Quito, Popayan,—the sources of the Magdalena,—and reached Santa Fé de Bogotá on the 1st December, 1838.

[The accompanying map contains Captain Gosselman's route; and the opportunity has been taken to lay down also that of the late Lieut. Hibbert, R.N., from San Juan to the Cordovese mountains, in 1821, no account of which—having been printed only for the use of his private friends—has been before given to the public, though it was the *first* journey, we believe, performed by any Englishman across the Pampas, of which any account has been printed, and is inferior to none which have since appeared in interest. It was performed under very trying circumstances, and for the most part over country untrodden and quite unknown even to this day. Indeed, both these routes cross a considerable track undescribed as yet by any but themselves.]

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